

Message Text

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45

ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CAB-02 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOTE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 PM-03 H-02 L-03 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 /071 W

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R 271134Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4710

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 9618

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, TH

SUBJ: CIVAIR: BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS

REF: BANGKOK 9490

SUMMARY: CONSULTATIONS MAY 19-23 WERE CONDUCTED IN FRIENDLY ATMOSPHERE AND ENDED WITHOUT RTG TAKING ACTION AGAINST U.S. AIRLINES, DESPITE REJECTION BY OUR SIDE OF RTG REQUEST FOR TOKYO-GUAM FIFTH FREEDOM RIGHTS.

ALTHOUGH THAIDEL ALLUDED TO POSSIBILITY OF RESTRICTING PANAM FIFTH FREEDOM RIGHTS FOR TOKYO-BANGKOK SECTOR, HOPEFULLY, FEAR OF RETALIATORY USG RESTRICTIONS ON LUCRATIVE AIR SIAM ROUTE TO LOS ANGELES WILL RESTRAIN RTG, AND THE OTHER SHOE MAY NOT RPT NOT DROP. END SUMMARY.

1. ALTHOUGH TAIDEL DID NOT ABANDON MAJOR (AND TO USDEL UNACCEPTABLE) ROUTE OBJECTIVES, NEW ELEMENT IN TALKS WAS EVIDENT WILLINGNESS TO THAIDEL TO SEEK COMPROMISE AND TO MAKE SPECIFIC PROPOSALS TO THAT EFFECT. FOR EXAMPLE, THAIDEL OFFERED TO ACCEPT FREQUENCY CONTROLS ON PROPOSED GUAM-TOKYO ROUTE, AND ASKED USDEL TO STATE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF SUCH SERVICES WHICH WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE TO USG, WHILE MAKING CLEAR THAT RTG WOULD PREFER TO REACH AGREEMENT UNDER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHICH AIRLINES OF BOTH SIDES WOULD BE FREE TO OPERATE

WITHOUT ANY RESTRICTIONS. USDEL POINTED OUT, OF COURSE, THAT REGIME OF FREQUENCY CONTROLS WOULD BE CONTRARY TO USG POLICY AND PRACTICE AND REMAINED FIRMLY OPPOSED TO THAI REQUEST FOR TOKYO-GUAM TRAFFIC RIGHTS.

2. SUBSEQUENTLY, DR. SIRILAK, UNDER MISTAKEN IMPRESSION THAT USDEL HAD OFFERED TO ACCEPT THAI DOC 1 (GRANTING RTG RIGHTS VIA INTERMEDIATES TO PAGO PAGO AND BEYOND) ON BASIS OF DEFERRING CONSIDERATION OF GUAM-TOKYO ISSUE, FIRST OFFERED, THEN WITHDREW, CONCESSIONS DESCRIBED REFTTEL. IT WAS EVIDENT THAT DR. SIRILAK WAS PREPARED TO SHELVE AIR SIAM'S INTERESTS FOR TIME BEING IN EXCHANGE FOR ROUTE WHICH COULD BE OF CONSIDERABLE VALUE TO THAI INTERNATIONAL.

3. AT END OF SESSION MAY 23 DR. SIRILAK SAID WITHOUT MALICE HE HAD MADE HIS LAST OFFER, AND THAT "WE WILL ALL HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE WHETHER THE FAILURE OF THESE TALKS IS A SERIOUS MATTER". HE DID NOT THREATEN TO TAKE UNILATERAL ACTION AGAINST U.S. AIRLINES, ALTHOUGH HE STRESSED REPEATEDLY DURING TALKS THAT RTG CONSIDERS FIFTH FREEDOM RIGHTS FOR PANAM ON TOKYO-BANGKOK AS RECIPROCAL OF FIFTH FREEDOM RIGHTS FOR AIR SIAM ON TOKYO-GUAM. DR. SIRILAK DID NOT RPT NOT PRESS FOR A SPECIFIC DATE FOR FURTHER TALKS.

4. IN FOLLOW-UP CALL ON AMBASSADOR AFTERNOON MAY 23, PANAM REPS (HALE AND LAYTON) SAID THAT IN EVENT RTG IMPOSES RESTRICTIONS ON PANAM ON TOKYO-BANGKOK, PANAM WOULD EXPECT USG TO RETALIATE AGAINST AIR SIAM SERVICES ON TOKYO-HONOLULU. WHEN REMINDED WE HAD UNDERSTOOD PANAM WAS PREPARED TO ACCEPT CONTRACTION OF TOKYO-BANGKOK RIGHTS RATHER THAN FACE COMPETITION ON MORE IMPORTANT PACIFIC ROUTES (STATE 68117), HALE SAID PANAM WOULD, OF COURSE, BE PREPARED TO LIVE WITH ANY COMMERCIAL CONSEQUENCES FLOWING FROM THEIR RECOMMENDATIONS, BUT WOULD EXPECT USG TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST AIR SIAM FOR PRECEDENTIAL REASONS. AMBASSADOR REVIEWED OVERALL SITUATION HERE AND TOLD HALE THAT INASMUCH AS USG HAD HELD LINE ON GUAM-TOKYO, HE HOPES PAA WOULD CONSIDER ITS INTERESTS ADEQUATELY PROTECTED AND THAT USG AND RTG WOULD BE ABLE TO AVOID SERIOUS CONFRONTATION OVER AIRLINE OPERATIONS.

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5. RTG HAS MORE PRESSING PROBLEMS AND CONCEIVABLY USDEL'S STATISTICS FROM INDUSTRY SOURCES ON INCREASED VALUE OF AIR SIAM SERVICE TO LOS ANGELES MAY GIVE THE RTG PAUSE. HOPEFULLY, THE RTG WILL LET MATTERS REST AS THEY ARE. THERE IS NO EVIDENCE THAT PRECIPITOUS REACTION IS CONTEMPLATED. WHITEHOUSE

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